

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for assigning a role to a computing device in a network data processing system, the method comprising:
 - providing at least a first physical object token, wherein the first physical object token includes at least one visible characteristic, wherein the first physical object token has role information associated therewith, and wherein the at least one visible characteristic is indicative of at least a first role associated with the first physical object token;
 - placing at least the first physical object token in a physical relationship with a first computing device;
 - associating the first computing device with the first physical object token;
 - receiving, by the first computing device, the role information from the first physical object token;
 - and
 - responsive to the role information being received, assigning the first role to the first computing device based on the role information.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the role information from the physical object token includes communicating with the physical object token through a communications adapter.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the communications adapter is one of a wireless communications adapter and a wired communications adapter.
4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the communications adapter is one of a universal serial bus adapter, a Bluetooth communications adapter, a wireless adapter using 802.11b communications standard, and a wired Ethernet adapter.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the role information from the first physical object token includes identifying the at least one visible characteristic of the physical object token.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the at least one visible characteristic includes one of a shape, a color, writing, and visible markings.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein placing at least the first physical object token in a physical relationship with the first computing device includes affixing the first physical object token to the first computing device using an adhesive.
8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein placing at least the first physical object token in a physical relationship with the first computing device includes placing the first physical object token within a given distance from the first computing device.
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the first physical object token is a container and wherein placing at least the first physical object token in a physical relationship with the first computing device includes placing the first computing device within the first physical object token.
10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the container is a computer shelving unit.
11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the first physical object token is a second computing device and wherein receiving the role information from the first physical object token includes identifying a role of the second computing device.
12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the first physical object token includes a data storage unit and wherein the role information is stored in the data storage unit.
13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the role information is encoded in extensible markup language.
14. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing one or more configuration files to the first computing device to perform the first role.
15. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing one or more software programs to the first computing device to perform the first role.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
associating the first computing device with a second physical object token;
receiving, by the first computing device, role information from the second physical object token;
and
responsive to role information being received from the second physical object token, assigning a second role to the first computing device based on the role information received from the second physical object token.
17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
removing the first physical object token such that the first physical object token is no longer in a physical relationship with the first computing device;
disassociating the first computing device from the first physical object token; and
removing the first role from the first computing device.
18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein removing the first role from the first computing device includes removing the first role from the first computing device after a predetermined period of time expires.
19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17, wherein removing the first role from the first computing device includes removing the first role from the first computing device responsive to a second physical object token being placed in a physical relationship with the first computing device.
20. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein removing the first role from the first computing device includes:
completing all units of work begun while the first role was assigned to the first computing device.
21. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein removing the first role from the first computing device includes:
passing at least one unit of work begun while the first role was assigned to the first computing device to a second computing device.

22. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
assigning a seniority level to the first computing device, wherein the first computing device has a more senior role than at least one other computing device.
23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein assigning a seniority level includes assigning the seniority level based on the role information.
24. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein assigning a seniority level includes assigning the seniority level based upon a physical location of the first computing device relative to the at least one other computing device.
25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the first physical ~~object~~ token includes an output device.
26. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising:
altering the at least one visible characteristic using the output device.
27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, further comprising:
receiving, by the first physical ~~object~~ token, status information from the first computing device;
and
presenting an indication of the status information using the output device.
28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving, by an operator, instructions for assigning roles; and
modifying, by the operator, the physical relationships between physical ~~object~~ tokens and computing devices according to the instructions.
29. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first computing device assigns at least one role to at least one other computing device based on the role information.

30. (Currently Amended) A system for assigning a role to a computing device in a network data processing system, the system comprising:

- at least a first computing device;
- at least a first physical object token, wherein the first physical object token includes at least one visible characteristic, wherein the first physical object token has role information associated therewith, wherein the at least one visible characteristic is indicative of at least a first role associated with the first physical object token, and wherein at least the first physical object token is placed in a physical relationship with at least the first computing device;
- association means for associating the first computing device with the first physical object token;
- receipt means for receiving, by the first computing device, the role information from the first physical object token; and
- role assignment means, responsive to the role information being received, for assigning the first role to the first computing device based on the role information.

31. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the receipt means includes communication means for communicating with the physical object token through a communications adapter.

32. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein the communications adapter is one of a wireless communications adapter and a wired communications adapter.

33. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein the communications adapter is one of a universal serial bus adapter, a Bluetooth communications adapter, a wireless adapter using 802.11b communications standard, and a wired Ethernet adapter.

34. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the receipt means includes means for identifying the at least one visible characteristic of the physical object token.

35. (Original) The system of claim 34, wherein the at least one visible characteristic includes one of a shape, a color, writing, and visible markings.

36. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein the physical relationship is a given proximity to the first computing device.

37. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the first physical ~~object~~ token is a container and wherein the physical relationship includes placing the first computing device within the first physical ~~object~~ token.
38. (Original) The system of claim 37, wherein the container is a computer shelving unit.
39. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the first physical ~~object~~ token is a second computing device and wherein the receipt means includes means for identifying a role of the second computing device.
40. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the first physical ~~object~~ token includes a data storage unit and wherein the role information is stored in the data storage unit.
41. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the first physical ~~object~~ token includes an output device.
42. (Original) The system of claim 41, wherein the output device is capable of altering the at least one visible characteristic.
43. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 41, wherein the first physical ~~object~~ token receives status information from the first computing device and presents an indication of the status information using the output device.
44. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein the first computing device assigns at least one role to at least one other computing device based on the role information.
45. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein the association means and the role assignment means are embodied within the first computing device.
46. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein at least one of the association means and the role assignment means is embodied within a second computing device.

47. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for assigning a role to a computing device in a network data processing system, the computer program product comprising:

instructions, responsive to at least a first physical ~~object~~ token being placed in a physical relationship with at least a first computing device, associating the first computing device with the first physical ~~object~~ token, wherein the first physical ~~object~~ token includes at least one visible characteristic, wherein the first physical ~~object~~ token has role information associated therewith, and wherein the at least one visible characteristic is indicative of at least a first role associated with the first physical ~~object~~ token;

instructions for receiving, by the first computing device, the role information from the first physical ~~object~~ token; and

instructions, responsive to the role information being received, for assigning the first role to the first computing device based on the role information.